

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 23, 2003

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2003–04 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1331

Introduced by Assembly Members Wesson and Jerome Horton

February 21, 2003

An act to add Chapter 4.8 (commencing with Section 832.91) to Title 3 of Part 2 of the Penal Code, relating to peace officers.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1331, as amended, Wesson. Peace officers: whistleblower protection.

Existing law provides for immunity from civil and criminal liability for peace officers for their discretionary acts in arrest situations, as specified, and as limited in case law. However, existing law provides for civil causes of action against a person or persons for damages and other relief for interference with rights secured by the constitutions and laws of California and the United States. Existing law also allows the Attorney General to sue for equitable and declaratory relief against a person engaging in a pattern or practice of law enforcement conduct that deprives any person of state or federal constitutional or legal rights.

~~This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to provide whistleblower protection to peace officers.~~

This bill would require law enforcement agencies employing specified peace officers to adopt a whistleblower policy, as specified, for the protection of those peace officers, no later than January 1, 2005.

By imposing new duties on local law enforcement agencies, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The bill would also create an offense for the intentional retaliation against a peace officer for having reported unlawful conduct or improper activity of another peace officer, punishable by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year and a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

By creating a new crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that with regard to certain mandates no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

With regard to any other mandates, this bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs so mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes. State-mandated local program: ~~no~~ yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 ~~SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to amend the~~
2 ~~Penal Code to provide whistleblower protection to peace officers.~~

3 SECTION 1. Chapter 4.8 (commencing with Section 832.91)
4 is added to Title 3 of Part 2 of the Penal Code, to read:

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6 CHAPTER 4.8. WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION FOR PEACE OFFICERS

7

8 832.91. (a) In order to promote a culture of accountability,
9 and detect and deter misconduct, every law enforcement agency
10 employing peace officers, as defined in Section 830.1, shall,
11 commencing January 1, 2005, institute "whistleblower" policies
12 and procedures, in a manner to be prescribed by the Attorney
13 General.

14 (b) The policy shall protect peace officers who report, based on
15 personal knowledge, any unlawful conduct and improper activity

1 *by peace officers and shall prohibit retaliation against any peace*
2 *officer who reports that conduct or activity or serves as a witness*
3 *about that conduct or activity in any proceeding.*

4 *(c) The Attorney General shall determine the minimum*
5 *standards to be included in the whistleblower protection policies*
6 *and procedures.*

7 *(d) Any person who intentionally engages in acts of retaliation*
8 *against a peace officer for having reported unlawful conduct or*
9 *improper activity by a peace officer is punishable by imprisonment*
10 *a the county jail for a period not to exceed one year and a fine not*
11 *to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).*

12 *(e) In addition to all other penalties provided by law, any*
13 *person who intentionally engages in acts of retaliation against a*
14 *peace officer for having reported unlawful conduct or improper*
15 *activity by a peace officer shall be liable in an action for damages*
16 *brought against him or her by the injured party.*

17 *(f) Nothing in this article shall be deemed to diminish the rights,*
18 *privileges, or remedies of any employee under any other federal or*
19 *state law or under any employment contract or collective*
20 *bargaining agreement.*

21 *SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to*
22 *Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution for*
23 *certain costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school*
24 *district because in that regard this act creates a new crime or*
25 *infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty*
26 *for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of*
27 *the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within*
28 *the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California*
29 *Constitution.*

30 *However, notwithstanding Section 17610 of the Government*
31 *Code, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this*
32 *act contains other costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to*
33 *local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made*
34 *pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division*
35 *4 of Title 2 of the Government Code. If the statewide cost of the*
36 *claim for reimbursement does not exceed one million dollars*
37 *(\$1,000,000), reimbursement shall be made from the State*
38 *Mandates Claims Fund.*

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